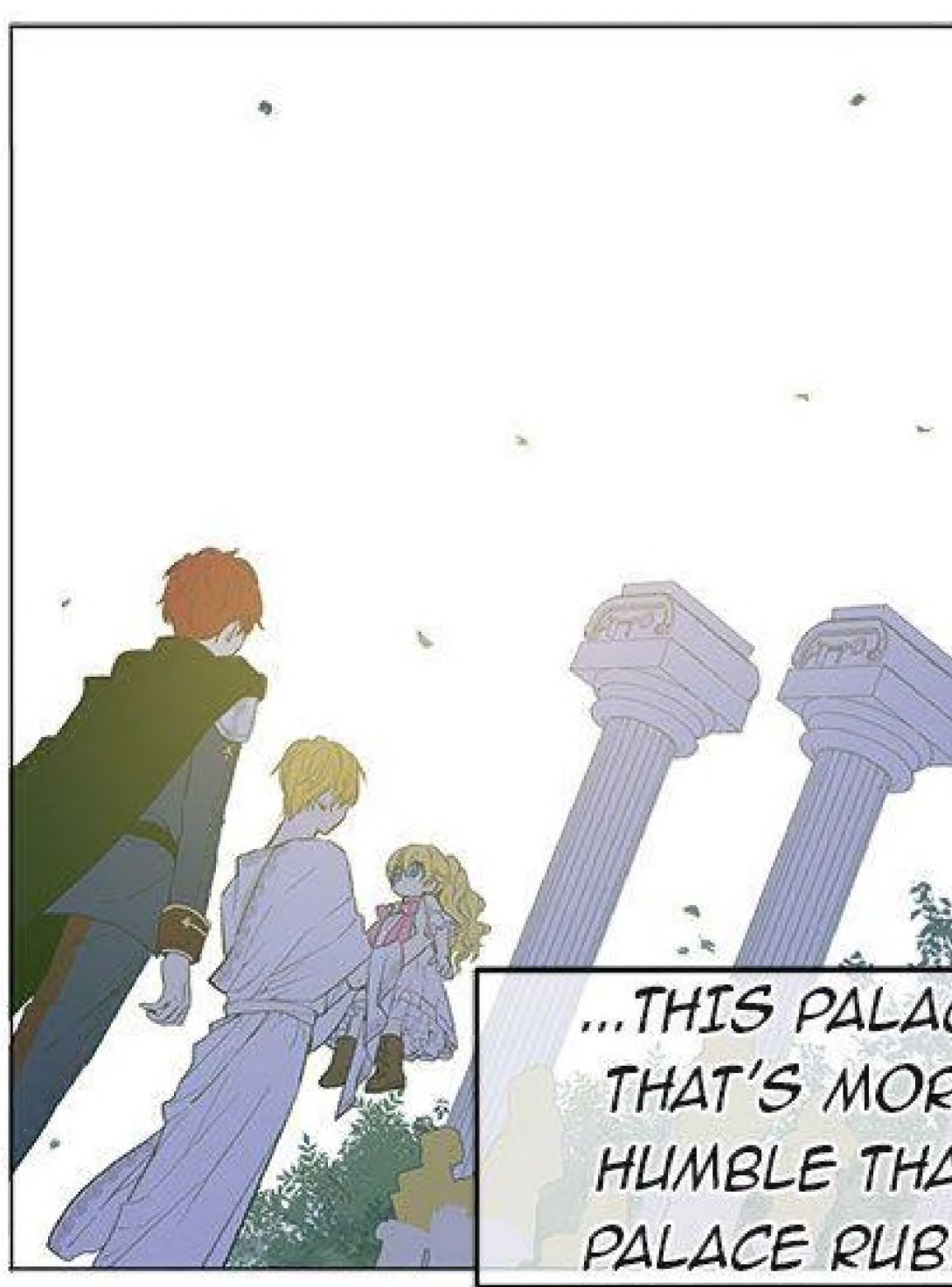


Whoosh

"MY PALACE,"  
HE SAYS?

THEN COULD  
THAT MEAN...



...THIS PALACE  
THAT'S MORE  
HUMBLE THAN  
PALACE RUBY...

...IS THE ONE THE  
EMPEROR USES?

9-YEAR-OLD  
ATHANASIA  
ENTERED THE  
EMPEROR'S  
PALACE BECAUSE  
IT WAS THIS  
CLOSE!

Shiver

glance

flinch





MAYBE  
SHE  
THOUGHT  
IT WAS A  
TOY.



SHE MUST  
HAVE  
WANDERED  
OFF DURING  
PLAY TIME.

FELIX.

?!

toss



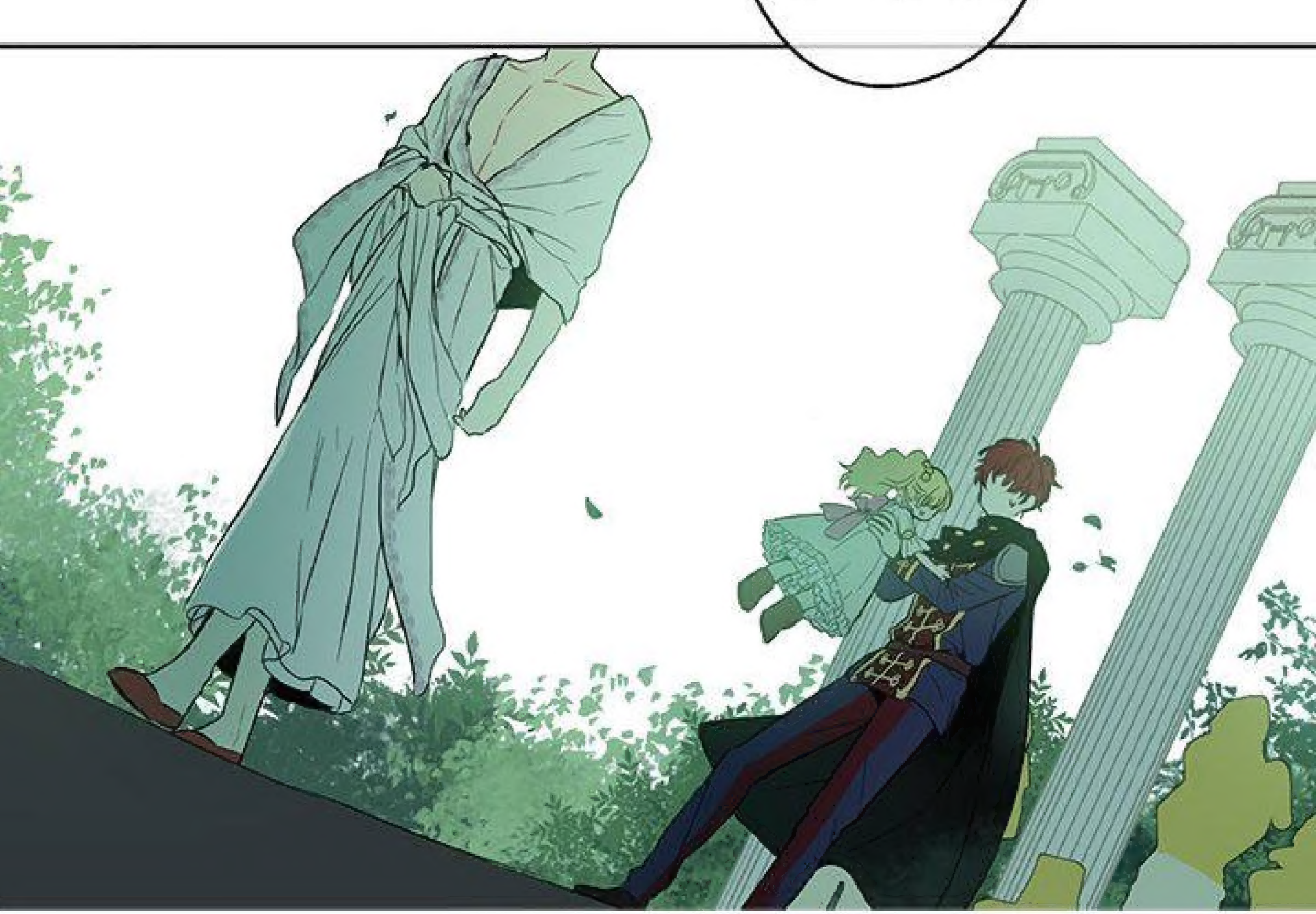




CARRY  
HER.



I SHOULD  
HAVE SOME  
TEA WITH  
MY GUEST.



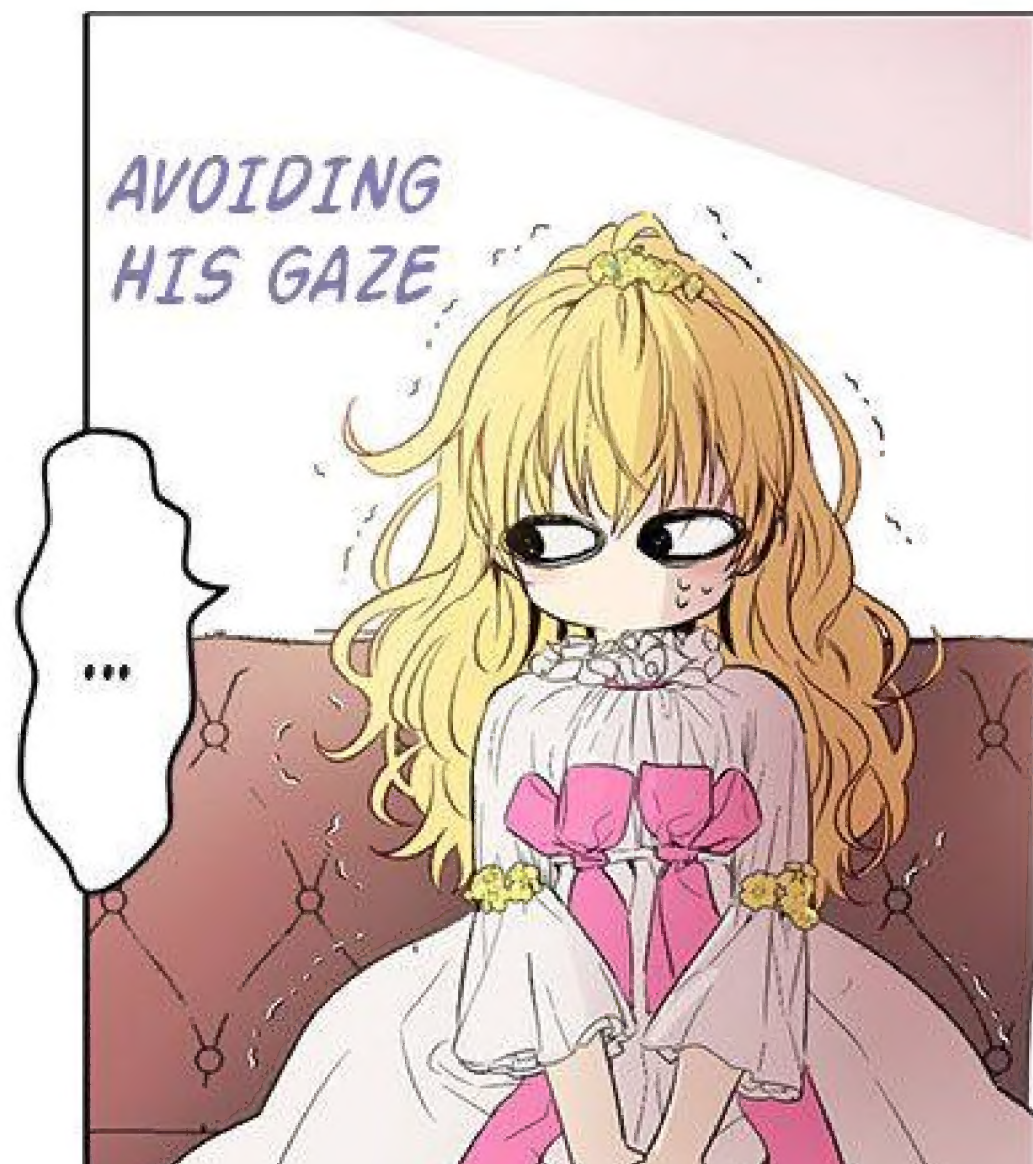
Comic **Spoon**  
Original Novel **Plutus**



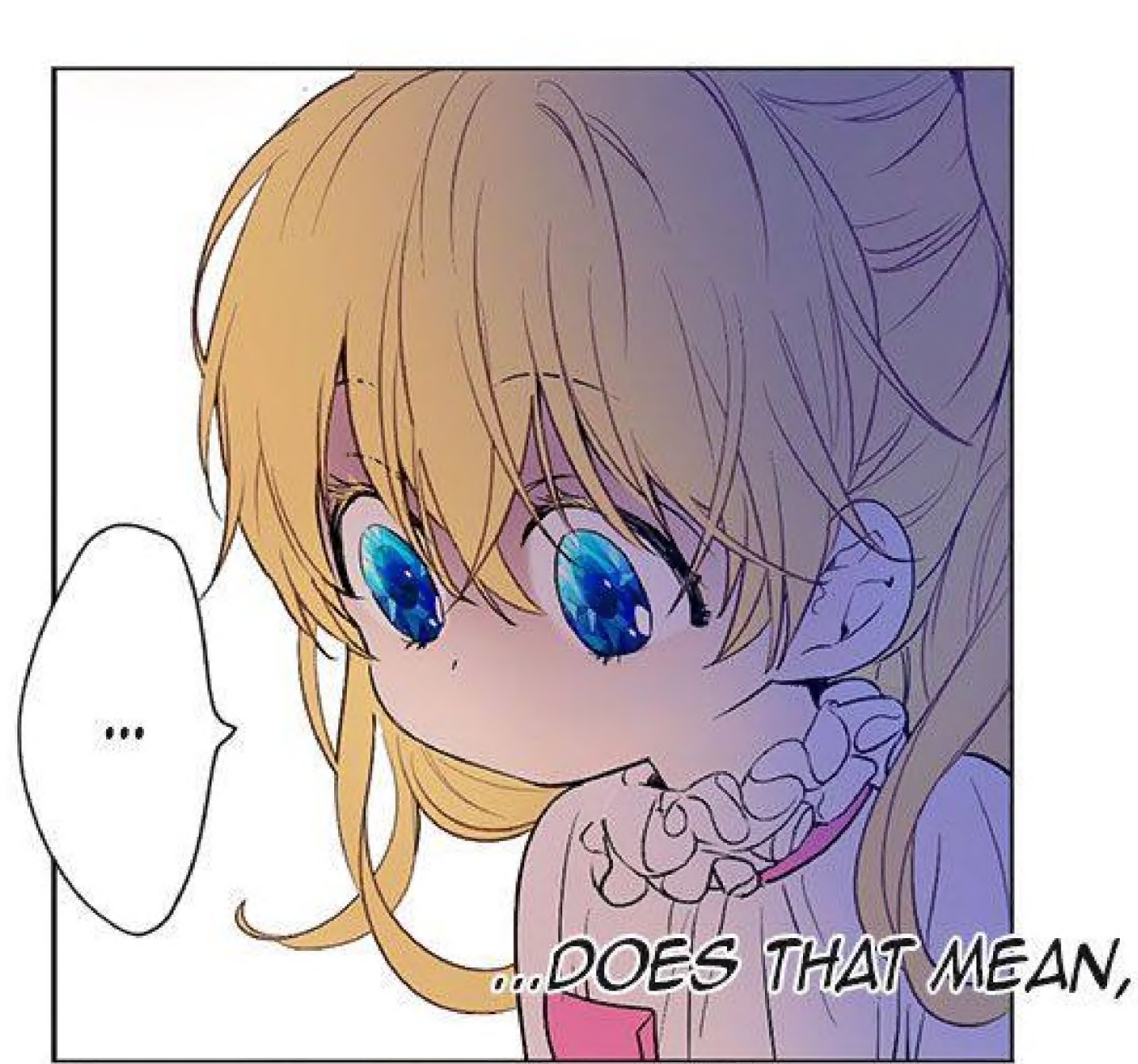
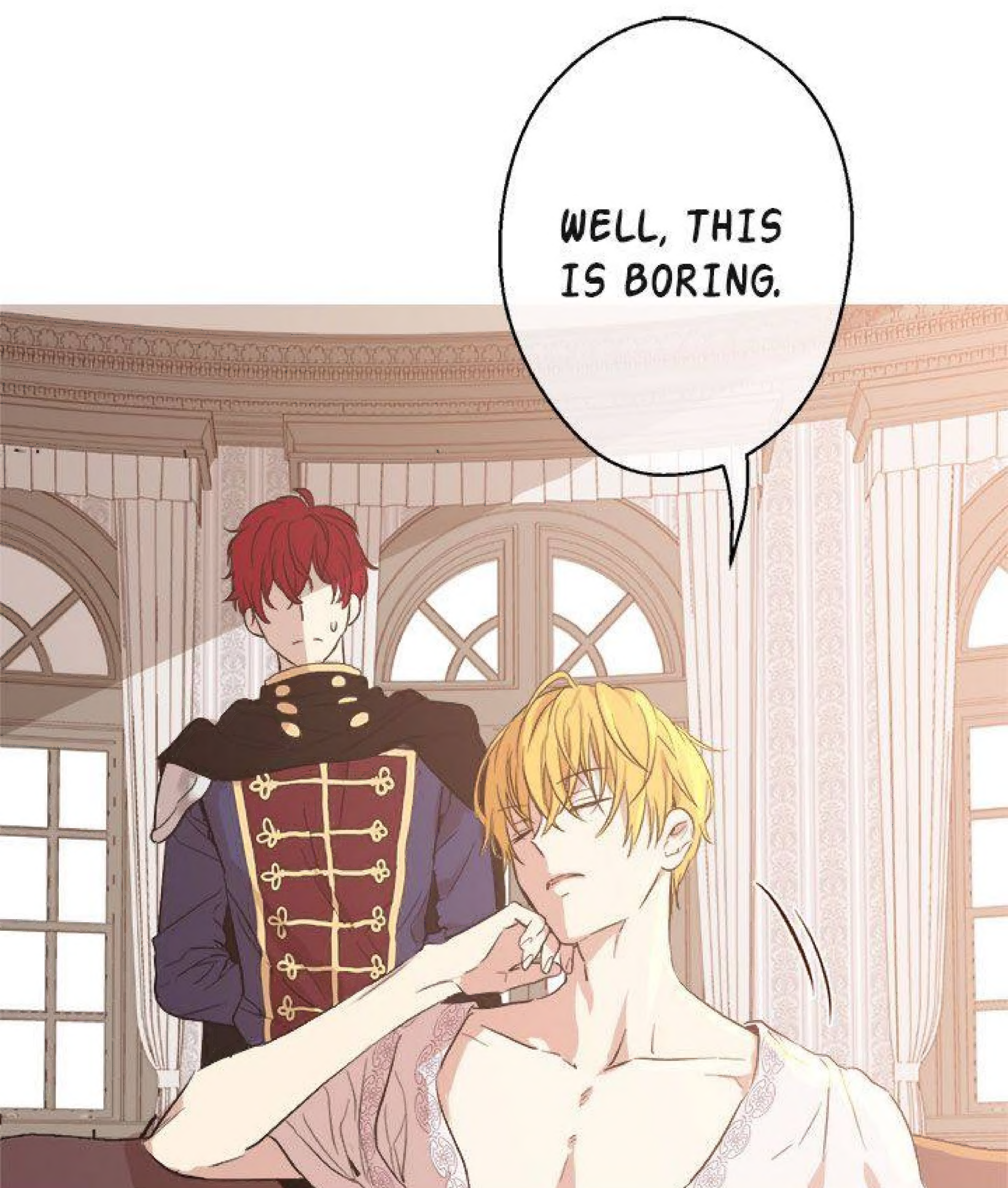




WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?











WHY DID YOU  
STAY SILENT  
UNTIL NOW?



...

PARDON ME,  
YOUR MAJESTY,  
BUT LITTLE  
GIRLS AROUND  
THE PRINCESS'  
AGE ARE KNOWN  
TO BE VERY SHY.



IS  
THAT  
SO?

Y, YEAH  
YOU JERK!  
KIDS CAN  
BE A BIT  
SHY!

EVEN A  
GROWN UP  
WOULD FALL  
SILENT IN  
FRONT OF  
YOU...!



YES, YES  
WHATEVER YOU  
SAY. JUST LET  
ME GO.







FELIX.

YES, YOUR  
MAJESTY?

LEAVE US.







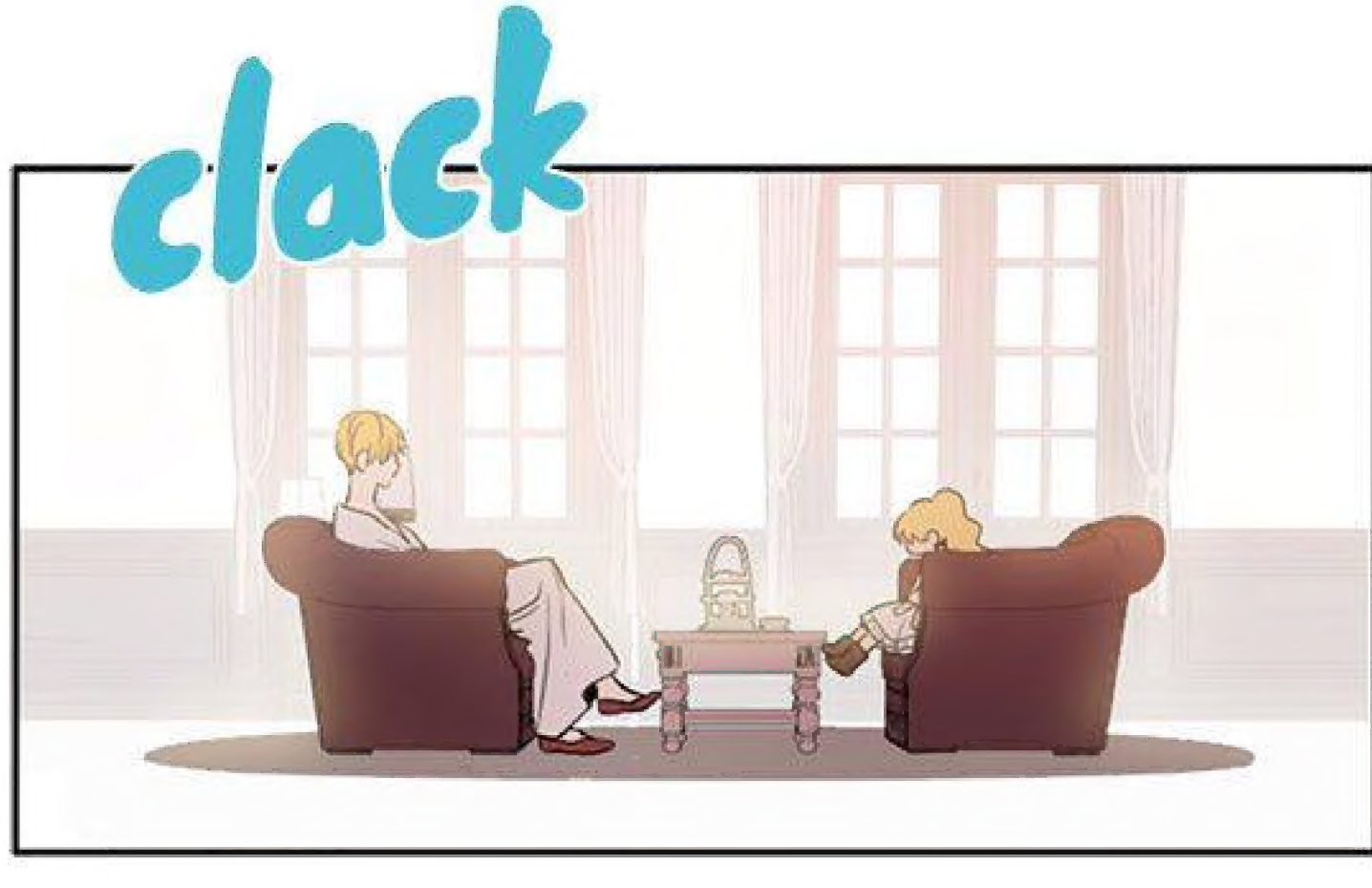
Huh?!



D, DON'T GO!  
MISTER..!



glance

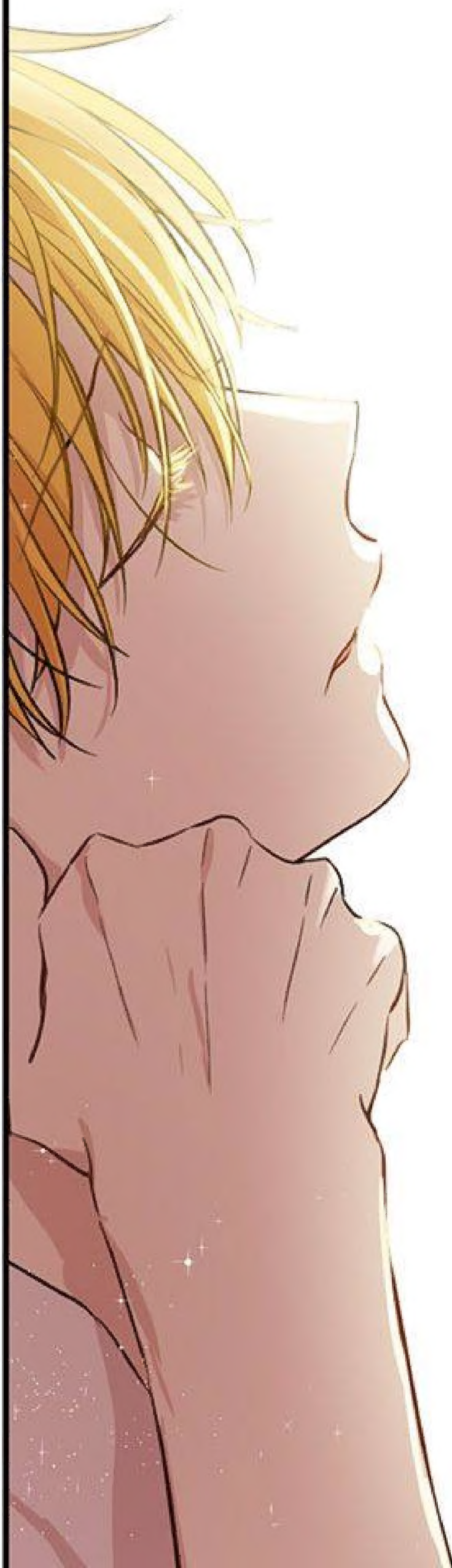


ATHY, IS  
IT? MUST  
BE A PET  
NAME.



!!

ATHANASIA.







WHAT A NAME.



AH,

DO YOU  
KNOW THE  
MEANING  
OF THAT  
NAME?

THIS IS BAD.



**clench**



PLAYING  
INNOCENT

tilt



MY NAME, THE NAME  
OF THE "KING."

*Atthanasia*

TO DARE  
GIVE HER  
OWN CHILD  
SUCH NAME,

AND A GIRL  
AT THAT.

SHE WOULD  
HAVE HAD HER  
LIMBS RIPPED  
OFF IF SHE  
HAD SURVIVED  
THE LABOR.

SOMETHING THAT  
EVEN CLAUDE,  
THE EMPEROR,  
COULDN'T RECEIVE.



OBELIAN EMPERORS ARE  
GRANTED NAMES THAT MEAN  
ETERNITY OR IMMORTALITY.





THE NAMES ARE GIVEN  
ONLY TO THE OFFICIAL  
"FIRST HEIR TO THE  
THRONE." THEREFORE,  
CLAUDE, WHO WAS NOT  
THE EMPRESS' SON...

...COULD TAKE THE  
THRONE BY FORCE,  
BY KILLING HIS  
BROTHER,

BUT HE WOULD NEVER BE  
GRANTED THE NAME OF  
AN EMPEROR.

SO THERE IS A  
GOOD CHANCE THAT  
CLAUDE MAY FEEL  
FRUSTRATED BY  
MY NAME...



...AND, YOU KNOW,  
MAYBE KILL ME.

SEE, I'M  
HARMLESS.

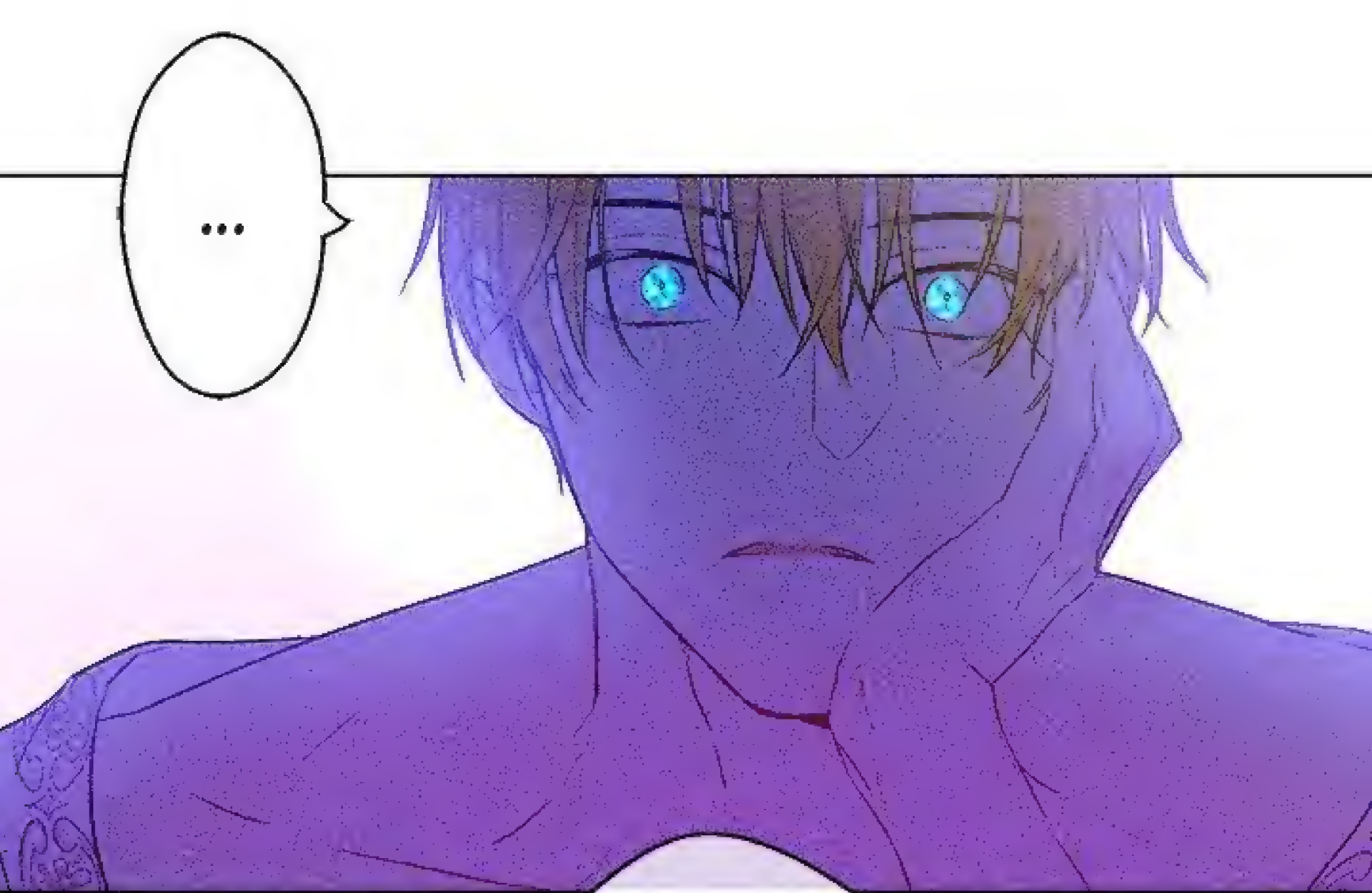
I HAVE ZERO  
INTEREST IN  
THE THRONE.

MY ULTIMATE GOAL  
IS TO LIVE A  
PEACEFUL LIFE AND  
DIE A QUIET DEATH.

I MAY HAVE A  
FANCY NAME BUT  
I'M NOTHING BUT  
A 5-YEAR-OLD  
GLUTTON...

WHY ARE  
YOU JUST  
SITTING  
THERE?  
GO AHEAD  
AND EAT.





...

I ORDERED  
THEM TO  
BRING OUT  
SOMETHING  
KIDS WOULD  
LIKE.



IF YOU DON'T  
EAT I WILL  
HAVE NO CHOICE  
BUT TO PUNISH  
THE COOK.

THANK  
YOU FOR  
THE FOOD!

HE'S  
THREATENING  
ME!

THIS JERK!!

tremble

tremble

I WON'T BE  
ABLE TO  
ENJOY THIS.



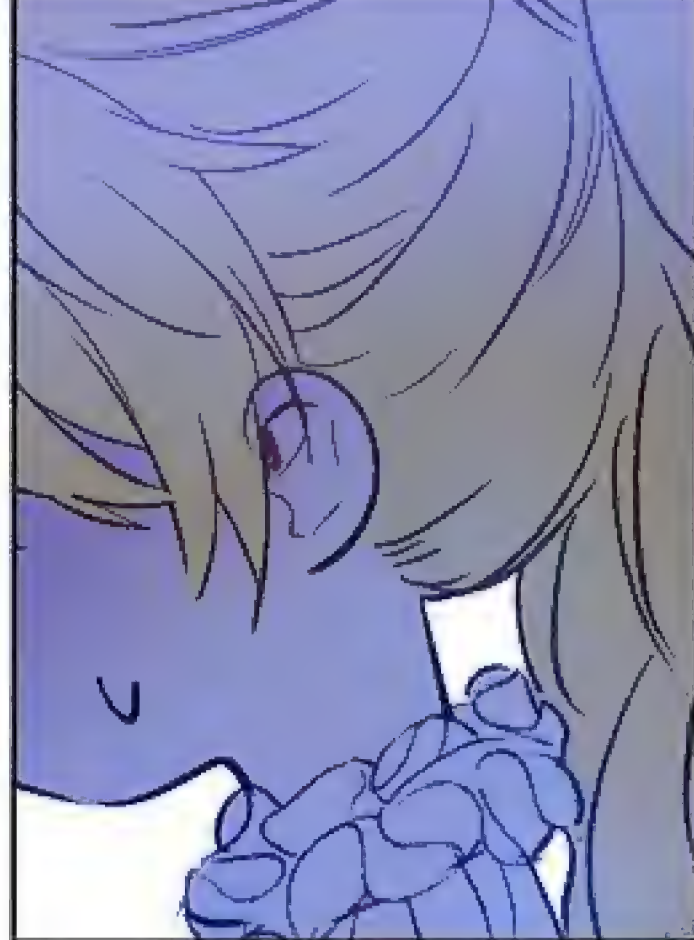


I DEFINITELY FEEL  
A STOMACHACHE  
COMING ON.

BUT IF I LEAVE  
ANY LEFTOVERS HE  
MIGHT GO ON A  
KILLING SPREE.



I DON'T  
KNOW HOW  
HE'LL REACT!



MY FACE  
MUST BE AS  
WHITE AS A  
SHEET.



YUMMY!

BUT I WANT  
TO LIVE  
LONGER.

SMILE!!

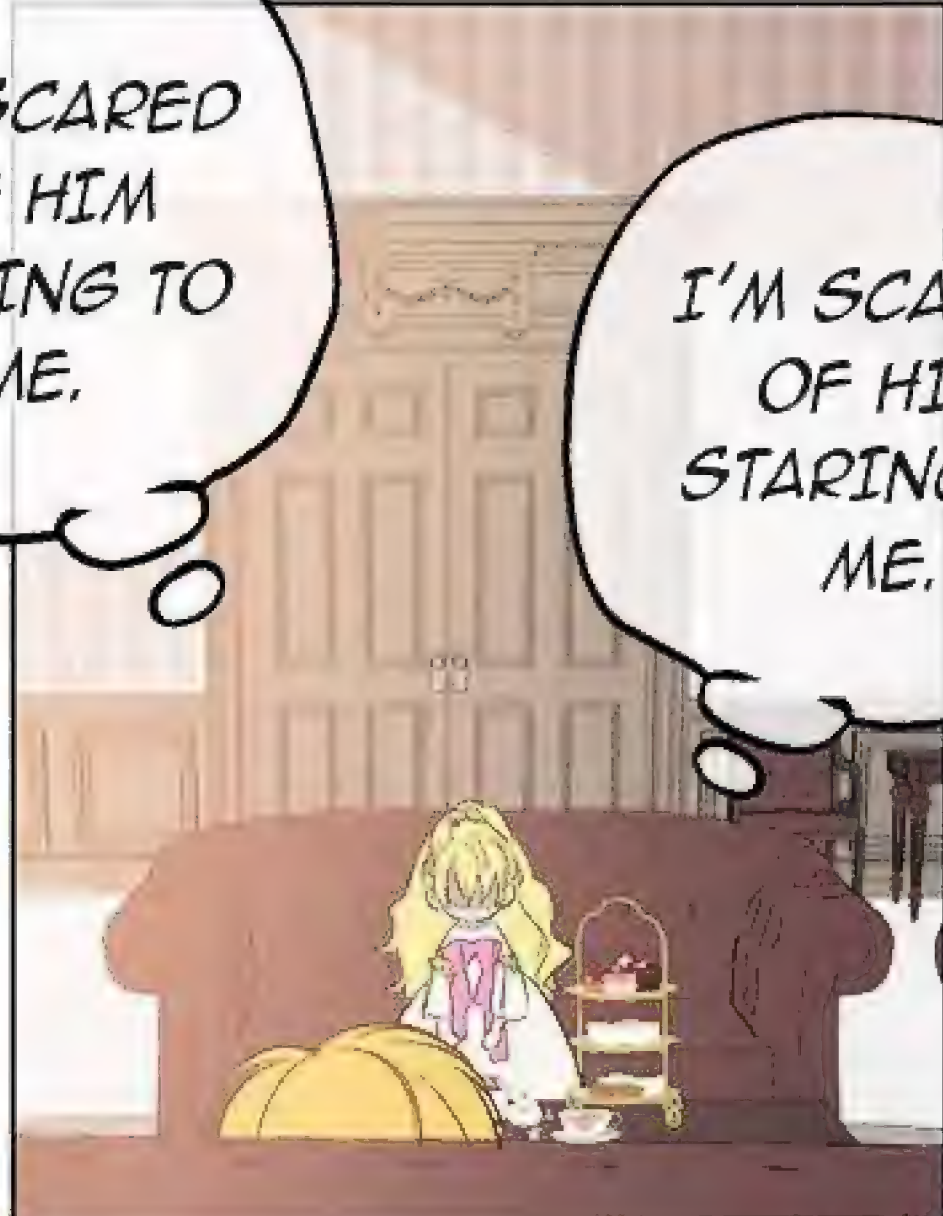




HNG... I  
MISS LILY.

I'M SCARED  
OF HIM  
TALKING TO  
ME.

I'M SCARED  
OF HIM  
STARING AT  
ME.



LET ME  
GO  
ALREADY.

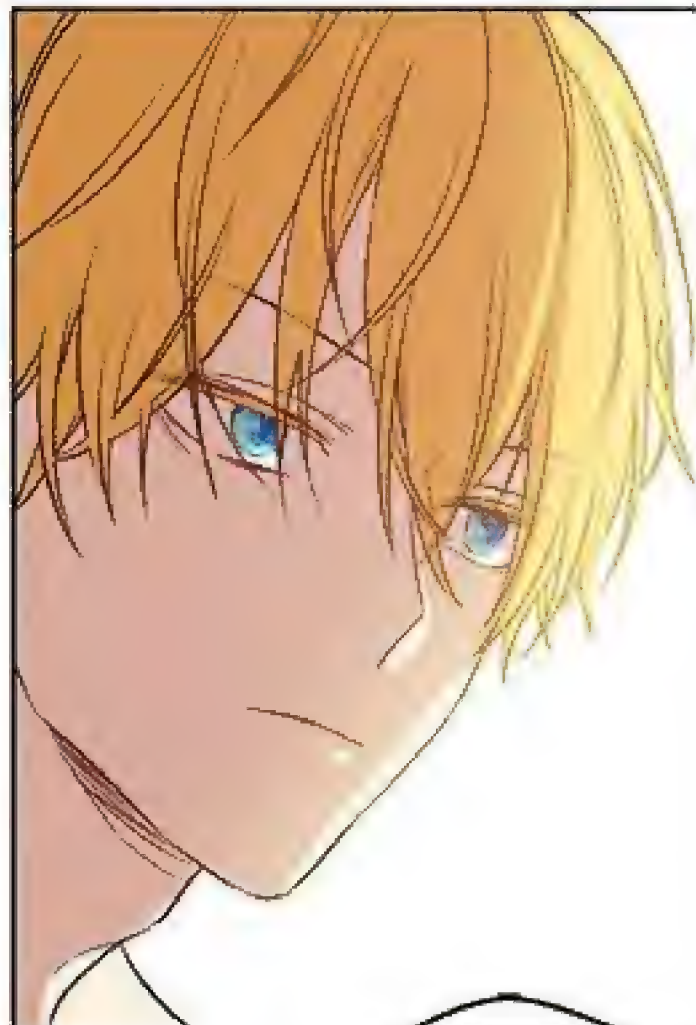
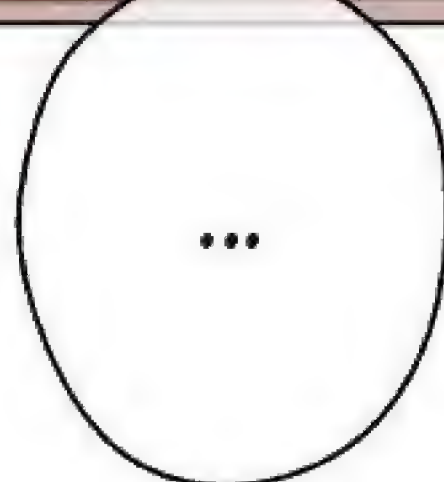


WHAT WAS I  
THINKING  
COMING INTO  
THIS DEVIL'S  
LAIR JUST FOR  
SOME GOLD?

WHO TAUGHT  
YOU YOUR  
MANNERS?



...



LILY  
TAUGHT  
ME.



I SEE, YOU ARE  
TALKING ABOUT  
LILIAN YORK.

startled



HOW DOES  
HE KNOW HER  
FULL NAME?





5 YEARS AGO,  
SHE STEPPED  
IN FRONT OF ME  
REQUESTING THAT  
SHE BE ALLOWED  
TO TAKE CARE  
OF YOU.

THAT LADY  
MUST STILL  
BE WITH  
YOU.



HUH? LILY?  
SHE DID  
SUCH A  
THING?

STEPPED IN  
FRONT OF THIS  
MONSTROUS  
GUY FOR MY  
SAKE?!

SHE ALSO  
TOOK CHARGE  
OF THE RUBY  
PALACE.



OH,  
LILY...!



I'M SO MOVED!



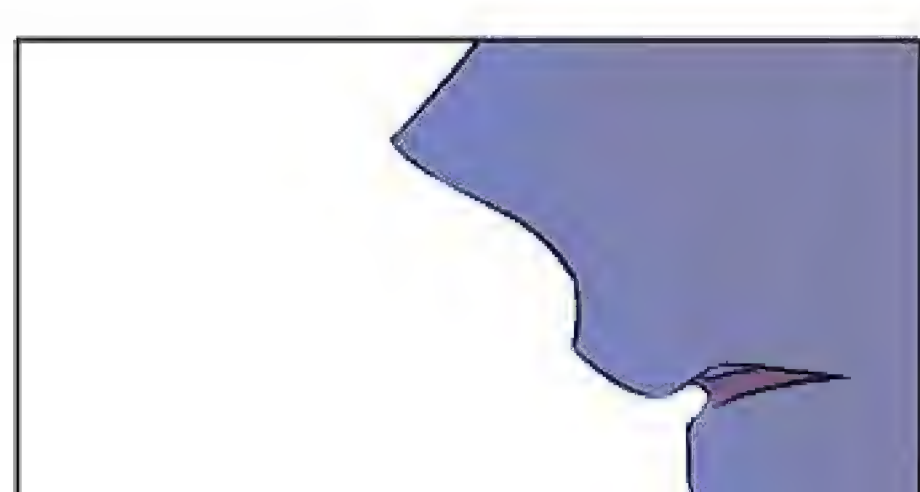
HOW  
DARE  
SHE.

THE ONLY TWO  
PEOPLE WHO  
SURVIVED AFTER  
GETTING IN MY  
WAY WERE YOUR  
MOTHER AND  
THAT WENCH.



...

munch  
munch  
munch





AS YOU SIT  
THERE, ARE  
YOU AWARE OF  
WHO I AM?



OH.

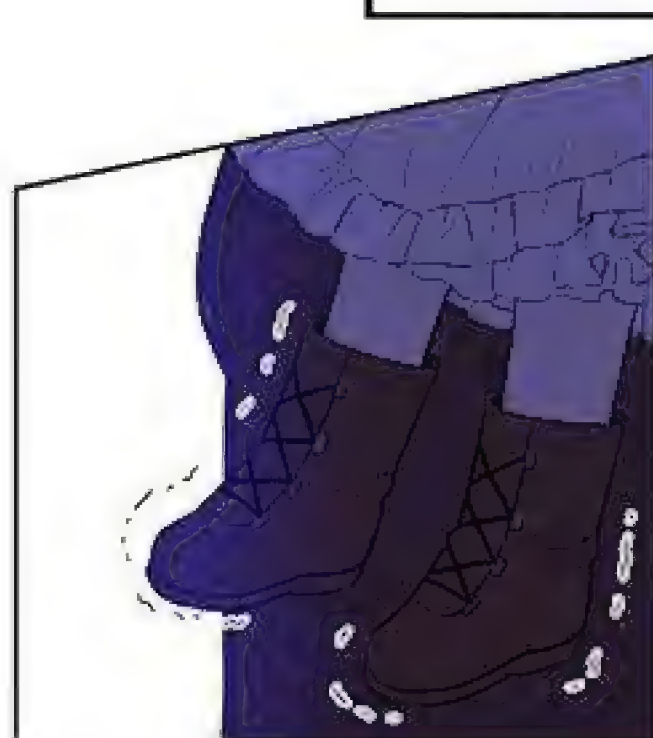
THIS ISN'T  
GOING WELL.







DON'T...



...TAKE YOUR  
EYES OFF HIM.



I THOUGHT IT  
WAS ODD.

WHY WOULD  
HE BRING ME  
HERE?

IT WAS  
PROBABLY  
ON A WHIM.



AN OPPORTUNITY  
GIVEN AS A PRIZE  
FOR DRAWING HIS  
ATTENTION.



THIS IS A TEST TO DECIDE,



WHETHER TO LET ME  
LIVE LONGER...





...OR TO HAVE  
ME KILLED.

To Be Continued

CARROOON



MAYBE 9-YEAR-OLD  
ATHANASIA WAS TESTED  
BY CLAUDE AS WELL.



IT'S JUST NOT  
DEPICTED IN  
THE BOOK.

WHAT  
SHOULD  
I DO?

WHAT  
CAN I  
DO?



tap

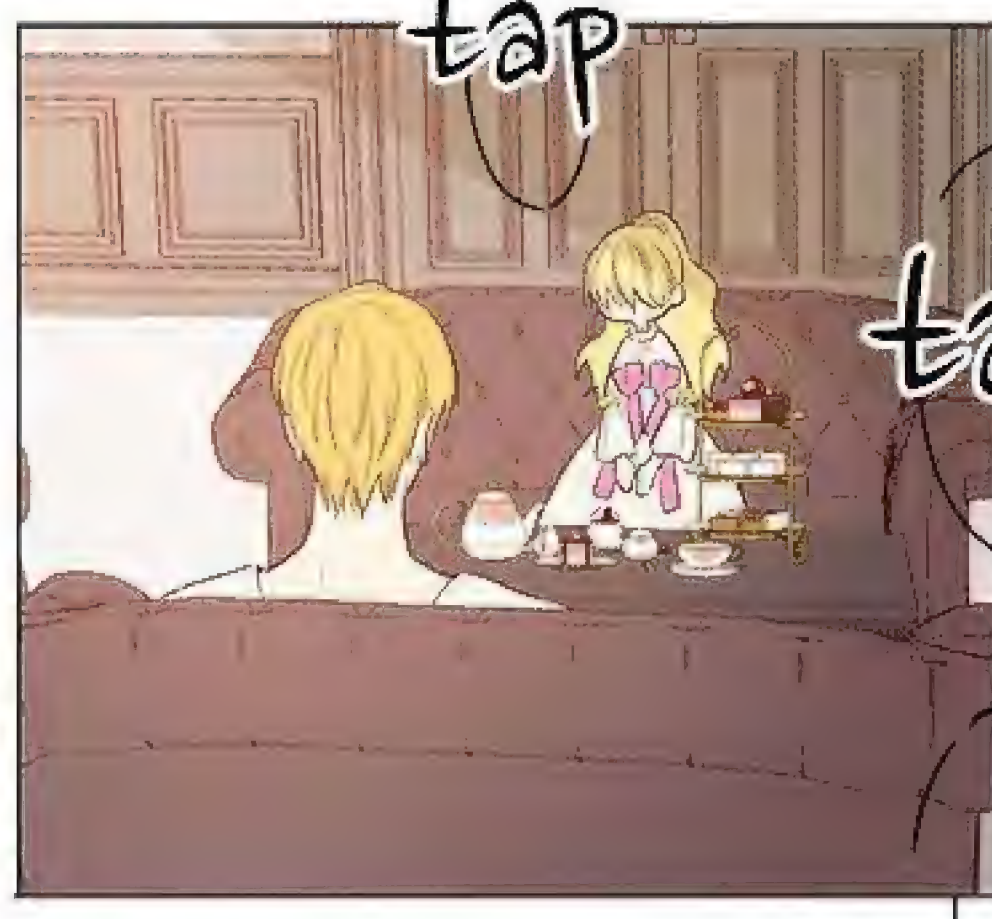
tap

tap



tap

tap



tap

tap

halt





F,  
FATHER?

uhf?

NOW YOU'VE  
GONE AND  
DONE IT.

OF ALL THE  
THINGS I COULD  
HAVE SAID,

gaaaaaahh

huuuuuuhh

Father?!

Father?!  
**FATHER?!!**

LET IT BE KNOWN  
THAT I'VE DUG MY  
OWN GRAVE.

Father-  
Father-

JUST ASK HIM TO  
BEHEAD YOU, WHY  
DON'T YOU?!

SUPREME AND  
NOBLE MAJESTY,  
THE EMPEROR OF  
THE GREAT OBELIAN  
EMPIRE.



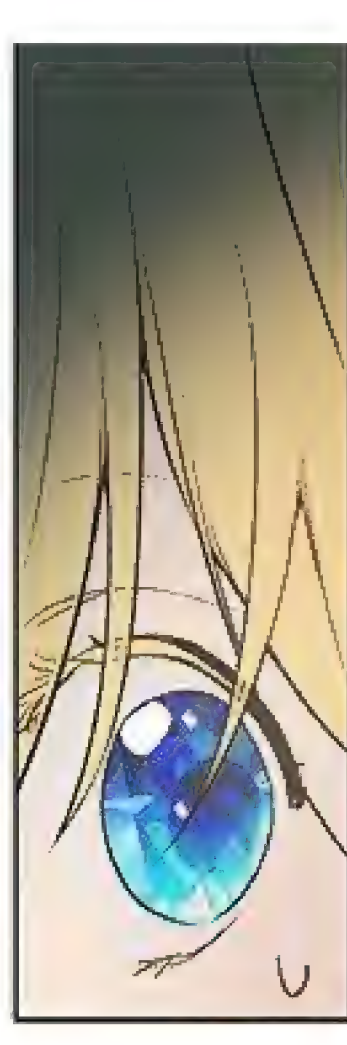
I SHOULD HAVE  
JUST KISSED  
HIS FEET...



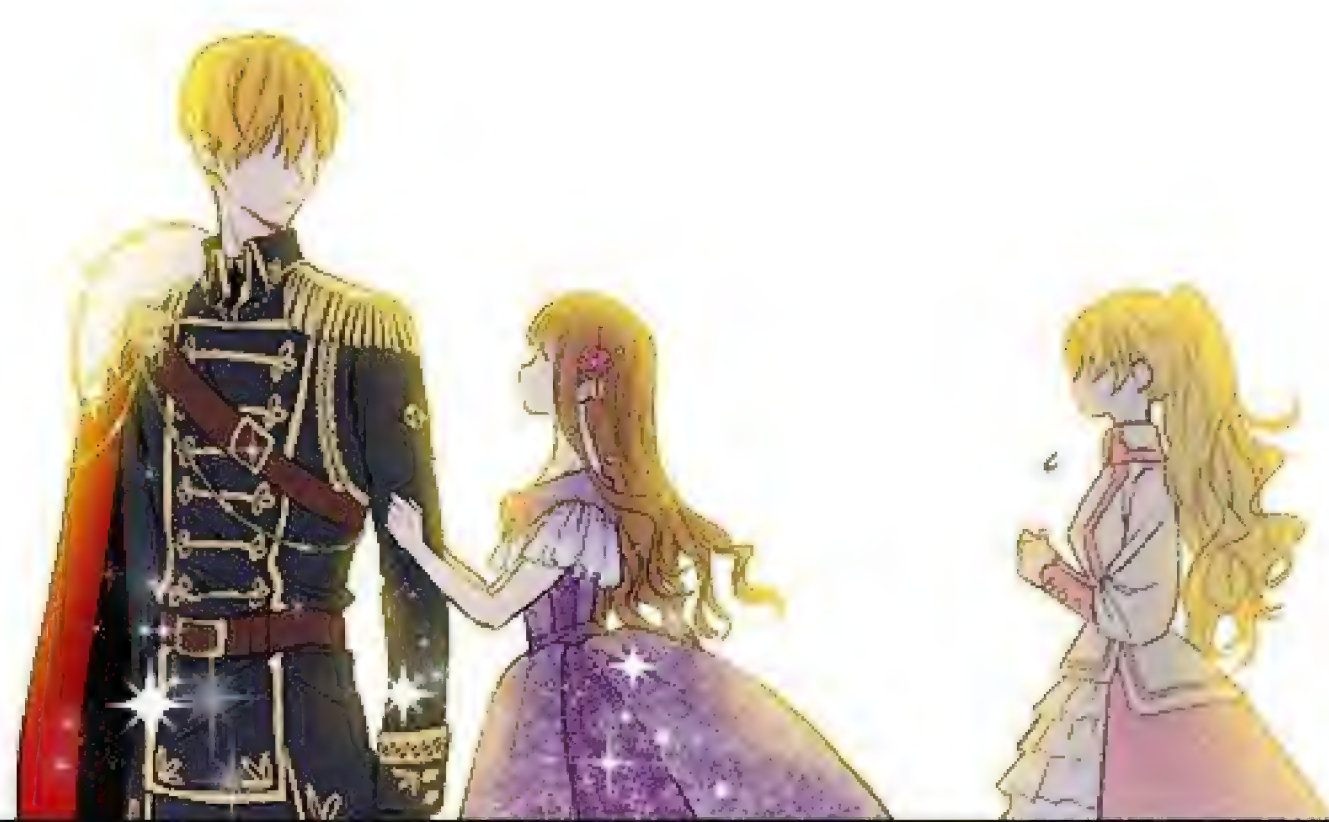




W, WHAT? DIDN'T  
I JUST HAVE AN  
EPIC FAIL?



CLAUDE  
LIKED  
JENNETTE,  
RIGHT?



THEN...

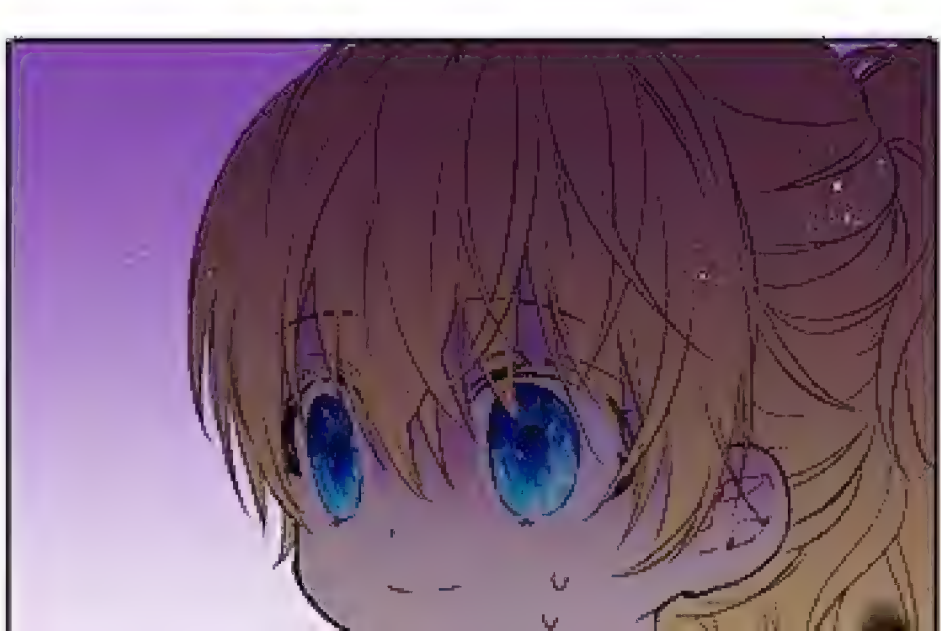
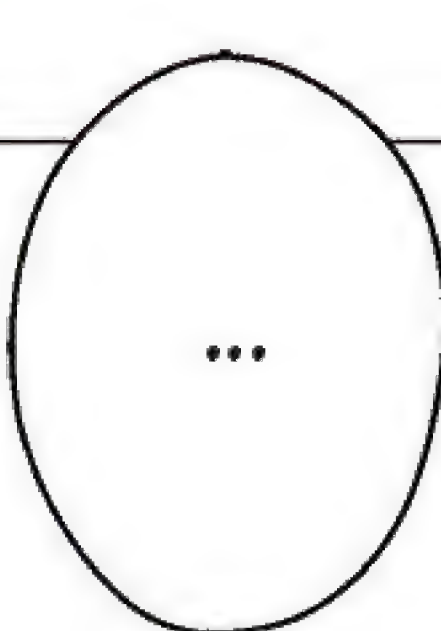
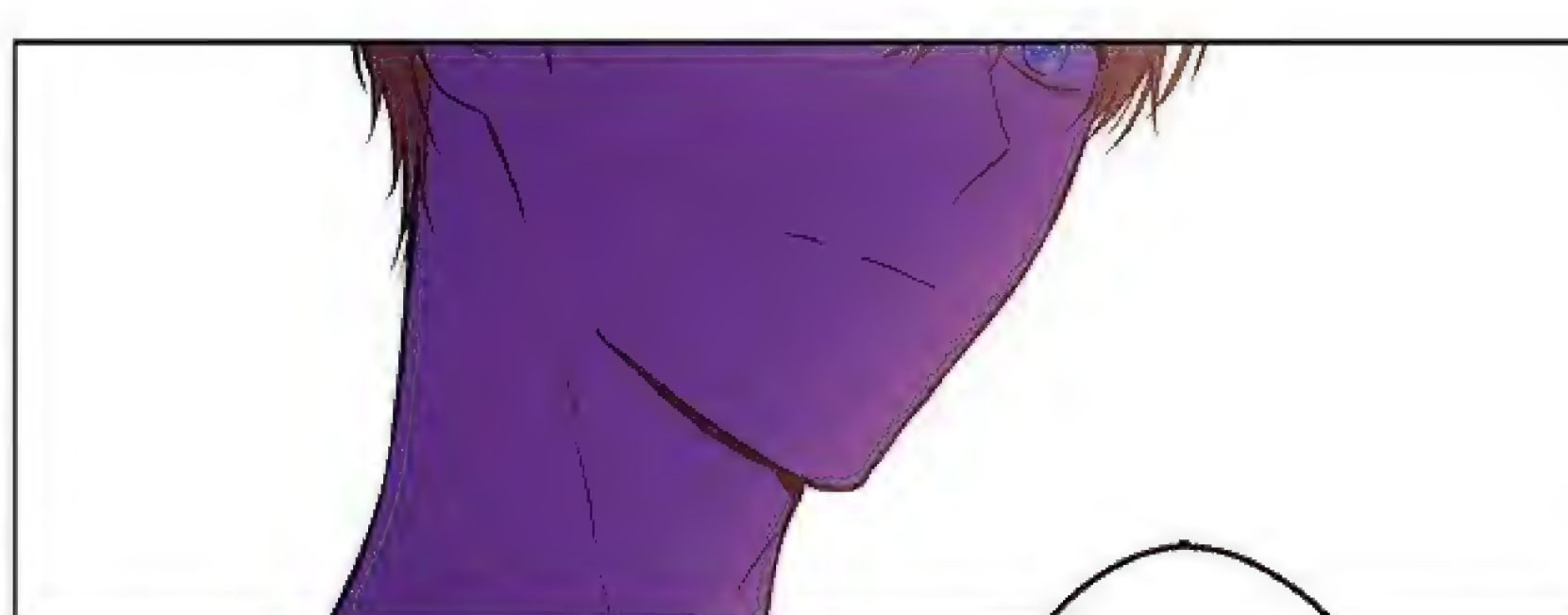
IF THAT'S  
THE CASE...







IF I'M JUST  
DRAWING HIS  
ATTENTION...







badum



badum



raise



GAAAAH!



WHY WON'T HE  
RESPOND?

NOW, I HAVE NO  
OTHER CHOICE....!!



PAPA!







*SOMEONE PLEASE TELL ME  
I HAVEN'T JUST COME UP WITH  
A NEW WAY TO BEG FOR DEATH!!*



Comic **Spoon**  
Original Novel **Plutus**



*TO GET STRAIGHT TO  
THE POINT, I SURVIVED.*





BUT THE RUBY  
PALACE WAS  
THROWN INTO  
CHAOS...



...SINCE I WASN'T  
IN BED LIKE  
I SHOULD HAVE  
BEEN.



IMAGINE THEIR  
SURPRISE WHEN  
I RETURNED IN THE  
ARMS OF THE  
EMPEROR'S ROYAL  
GUARD.





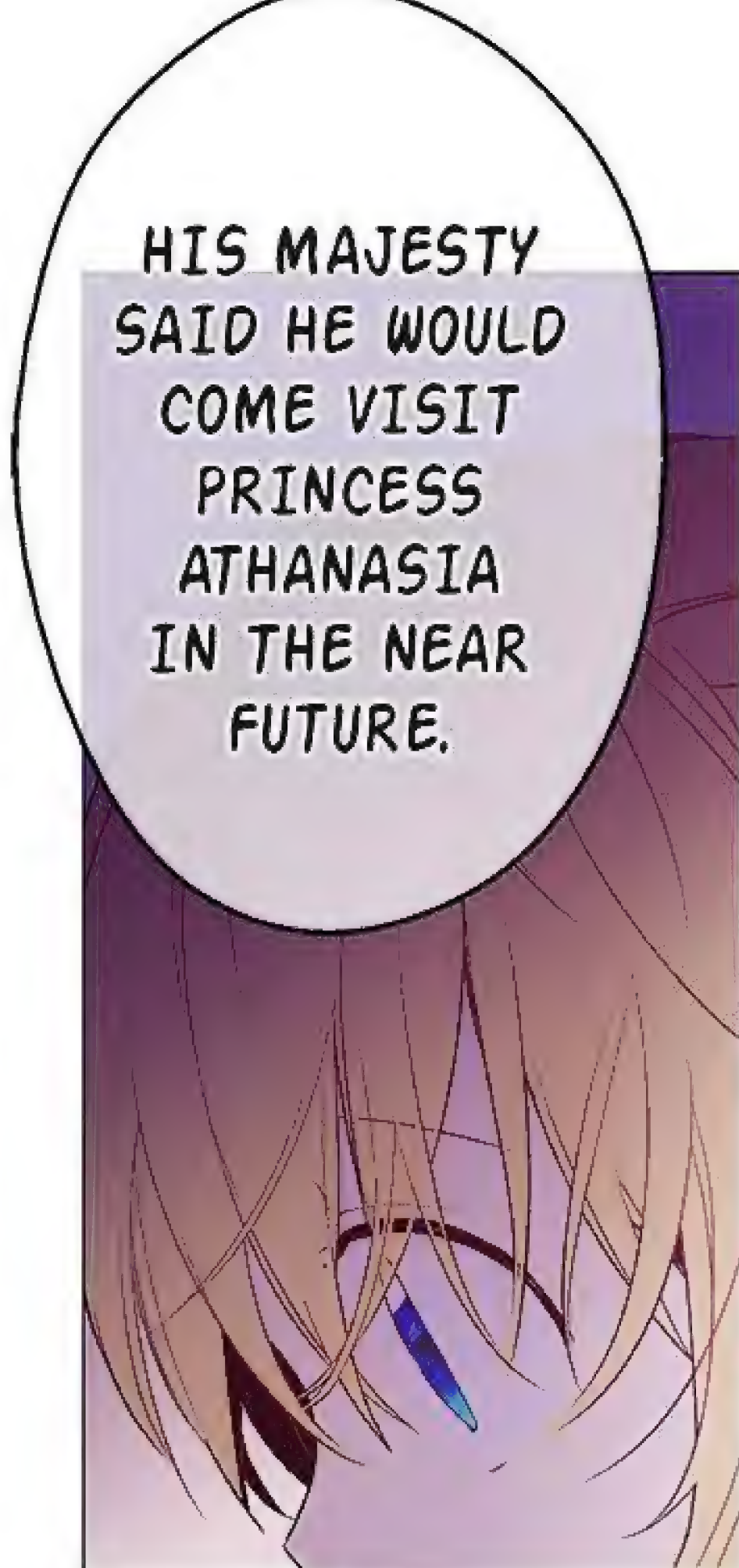


THE KIDNAPPER!!



I WON'T  
HELP.

HE LEFT ME  
ALONE WITH  
CLAUDE.



HIS MAJESTY  
SAID HE WOULD  
COME VISIT  
PRINCESS  
ATHANASIA  
IN THE NEAR  
FUTURE.



EH?!



DID HE  
JUST...?

AH...

HUH?

?!

WHAT'S WITH



WHAT'S WITH  
THIS RESPONSE?



HALF-SCARED  
HALF-HAPPY

IS EVERYONE THIS  
HAPPY TO RECEIVE  
THE EMPEROR'S  
ATTENTION?

WHAT WOULD  
THAT DIRTBAG  
CLAUDE WANT  
WITH ME?

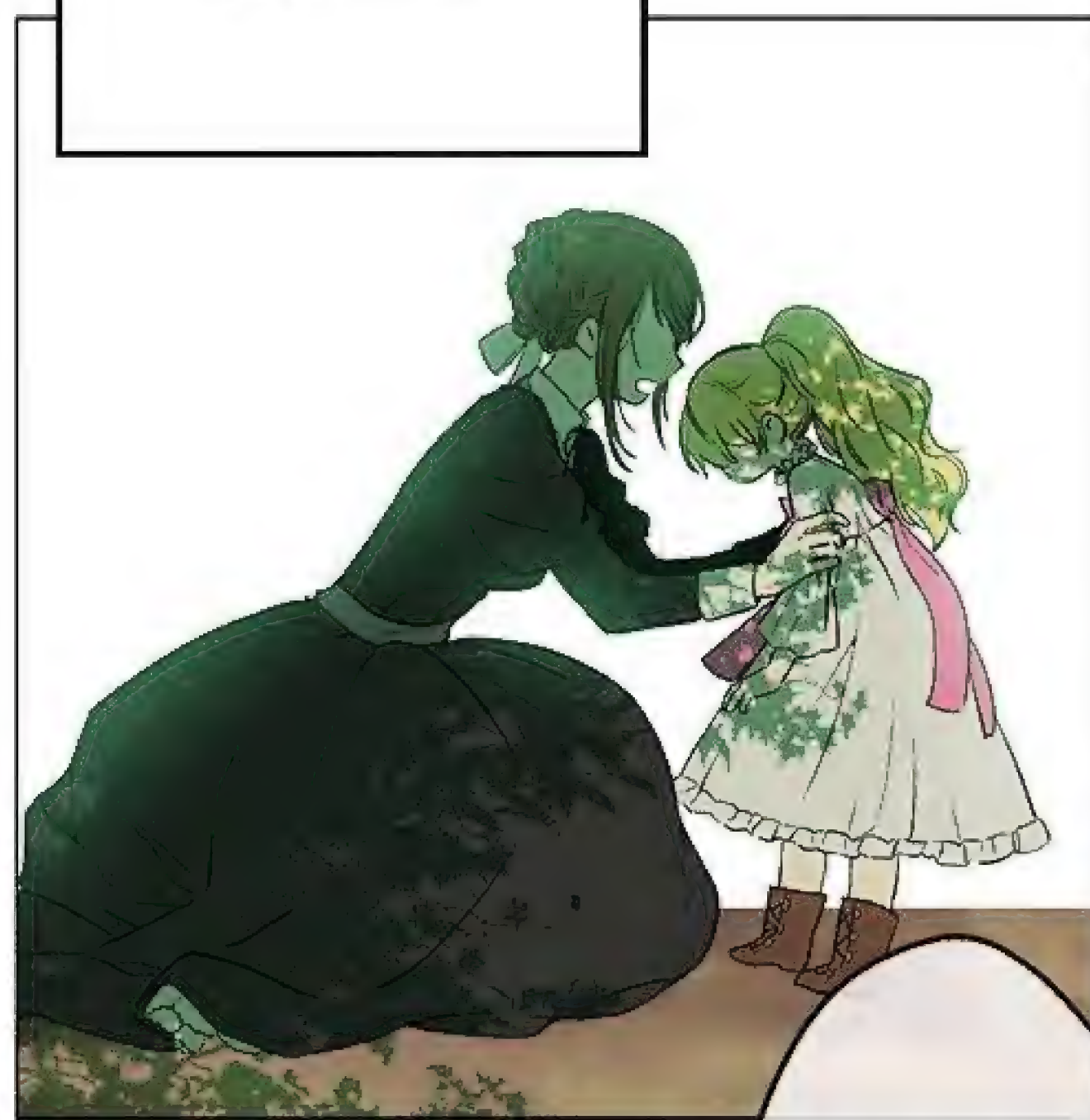


NO! NO!  
WAAAAHH!!

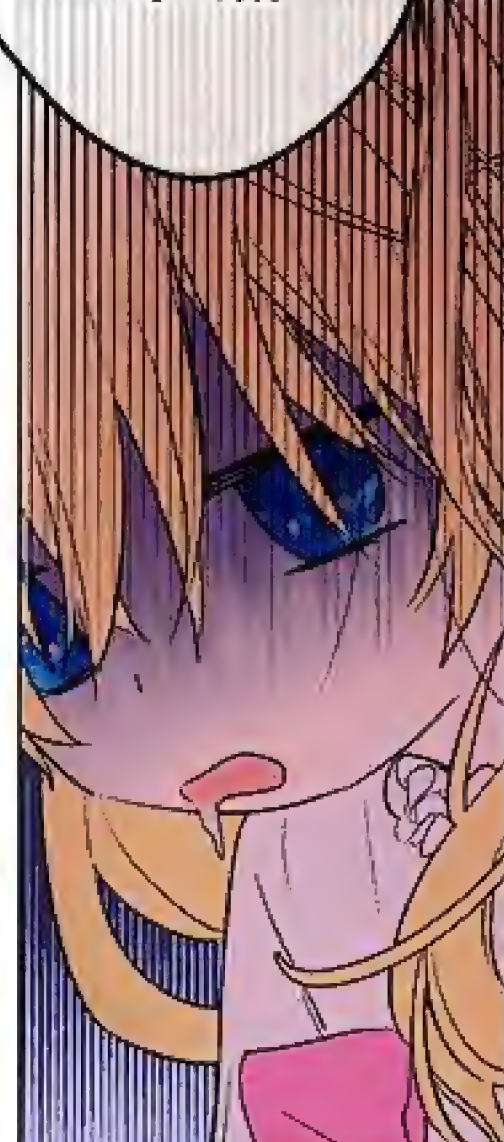


BUT LIFE  
NEVER  
GOES AS I  
PLANNED.

MY FAITH IS  
SEALED IN  
WHICHEVER WAY  
THE EMPEROR  
WANTS IT.



PRINCESS,  
ARE YOU  
HUR...



BLAACCH!

PRINCESS!



BUT FIRST, I SHOULD  
EMPTY OUT MY STOMACH...



Plan A Failed

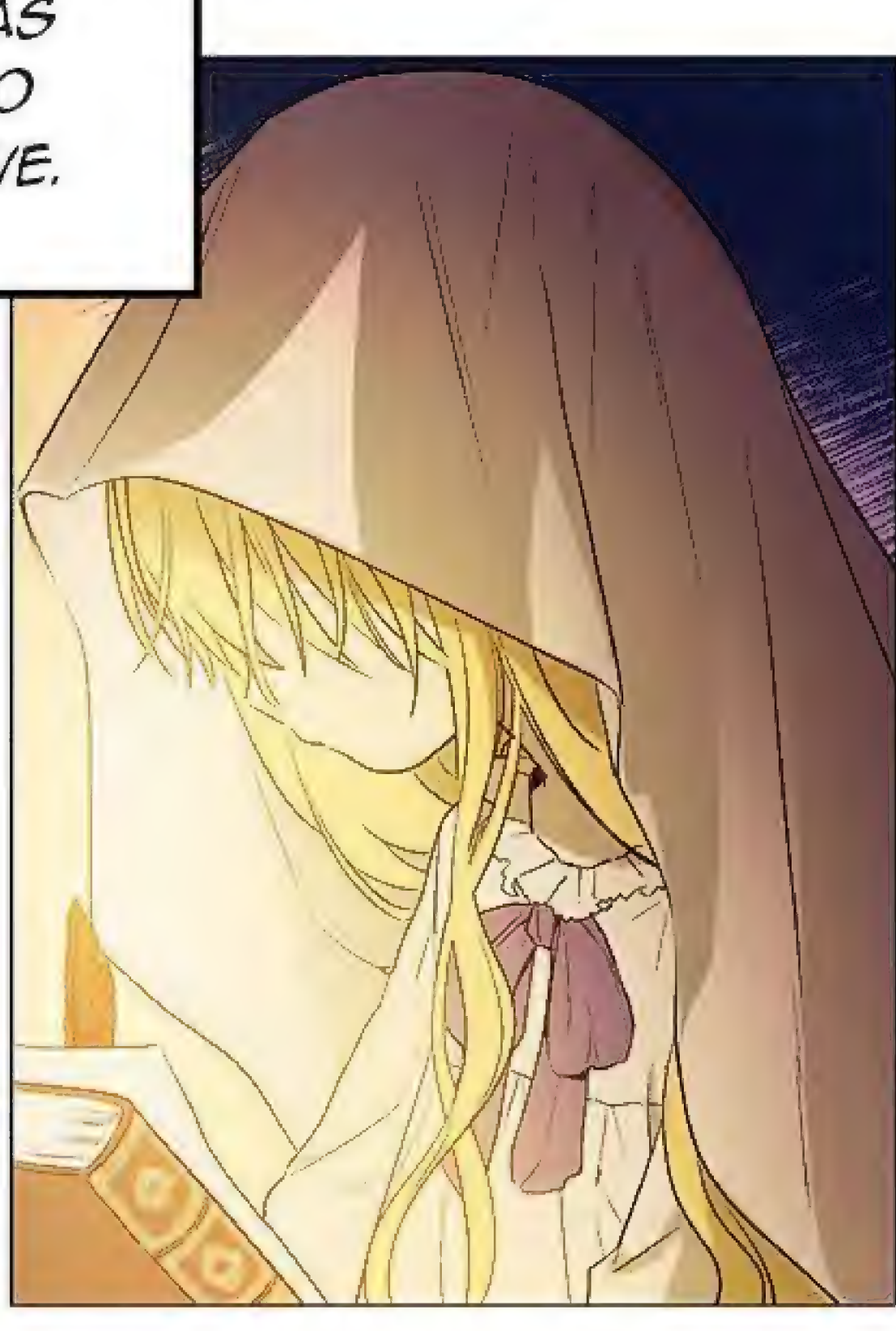
PLAN A:  
NOT GETTING  
NOTICED  
BY CLAUDE AND  
LIVING INSIDE  
RUBY PALACE  
UNTIL I DIE.

**Scratch**

~~Plan A Failed~~

**Scratch**

I WAS  
TOO  
NAIVE.



I THOUGHT EVERYTHING  
WOULD BE FINE AS LONG  
AS I WAS CAREFUL.



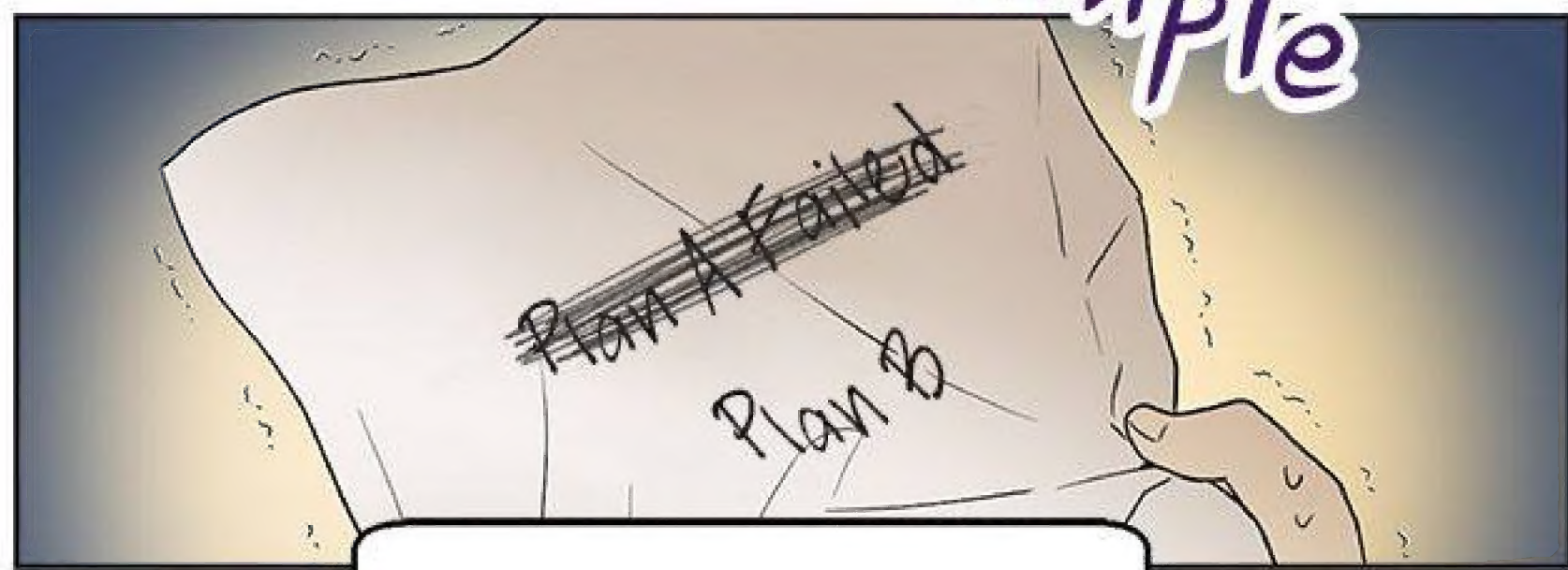




HOW COULD  
THAT SIMPLE  
LOOKING  
PALACE  
BE CLAUDE'S  
LIVING SPACE!

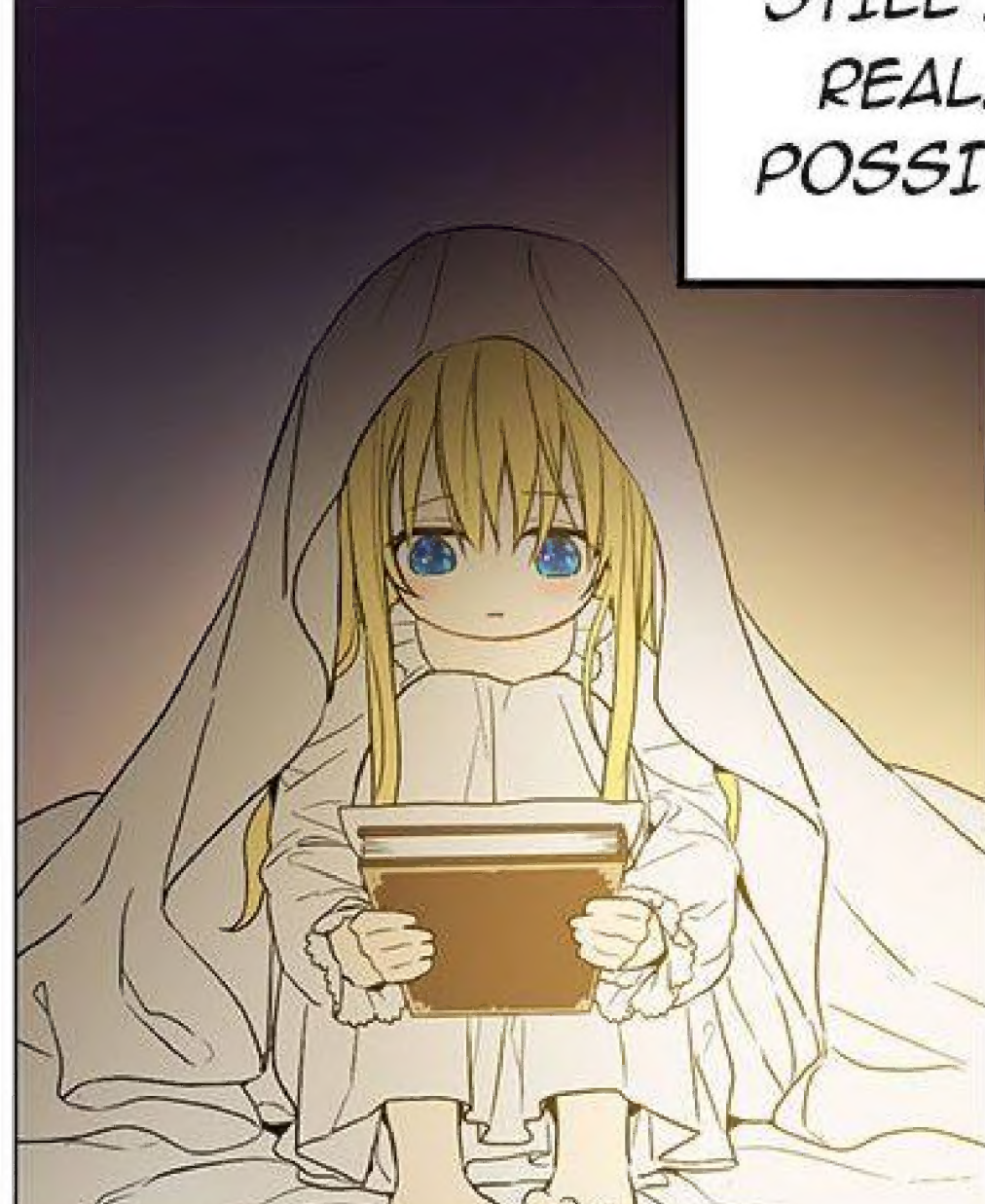
RUBY PALACE IS  
SUPPOSED TO HOUSE  
THE CONCUBINES NOT  
THE EMPRESS. WHY IS  
IT SO CLOSE TO THE  
EMPEROR'S PALACE?

*crumple*



PLAN B:  
SAVE ENOUGH  
MONEY TO ESCAPE  
THE PALACE BEFORE  
TURNING 18.

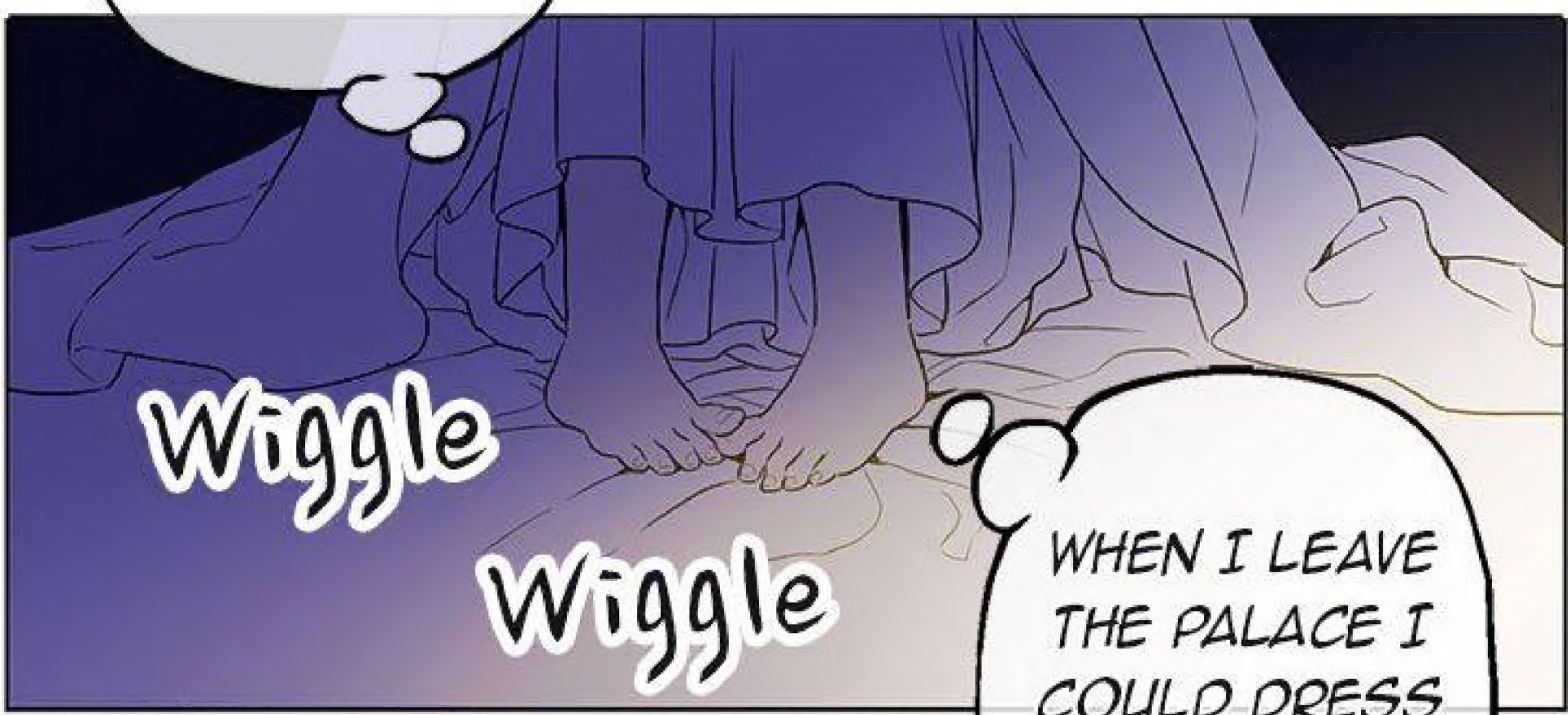
AH, THIS IS  
STILL IN THE  
REALM OF  
POSSIBILITY.



ALTHOUGH I  
ENDED UP MEETING  
CLAUDE 4 YEARS  
EARLIER...

HE DOESN'T SEEM TO  
WANT TO KILL ME  
THIS INSTANT...

SHOULD I BE  
COLLECTING  
MORE OF MY  
PRETTIES?



WHEN I LEAVE  
THE PALACE I  
COULD DRESS  
UP AS ONE OF  
THE MAIDS AND  
USE THE DOGGY  
DOOR.

*glance*



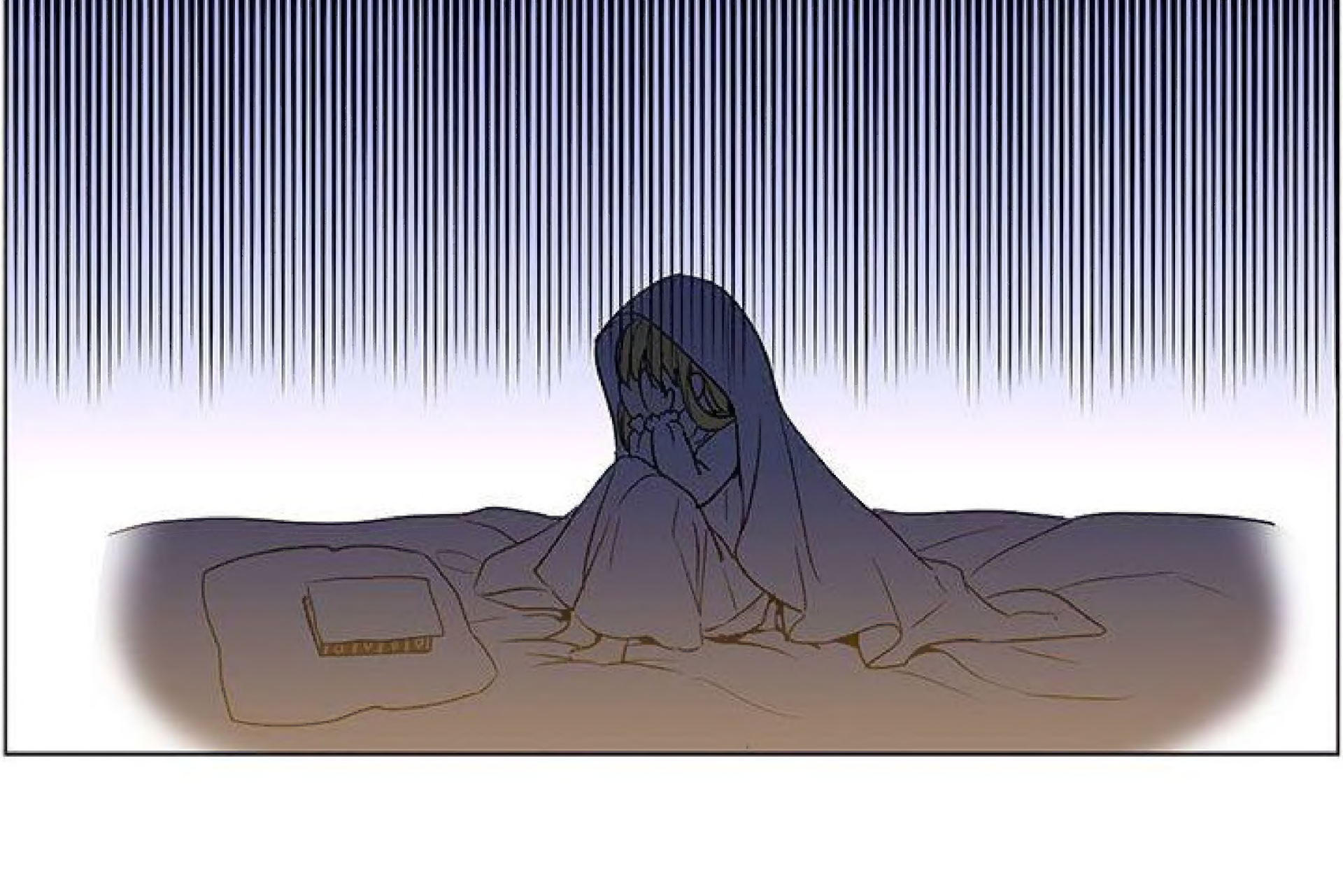




AND FINALLY...



PLAN C:  
CONTINUE PLAYING CUTE  
TO STEAL CLAUDE'S HEART.



I... I SUPPOSE IT'S  
NOT IMPOSSIBLE?







I ALREADY KNOW WHAT  
HAPPENS ACCORDING  
TO THE BOOK.

MAYBE BEING  
"DADDY'S  
LITTLE GIRL" IS  
PUSHING IT...

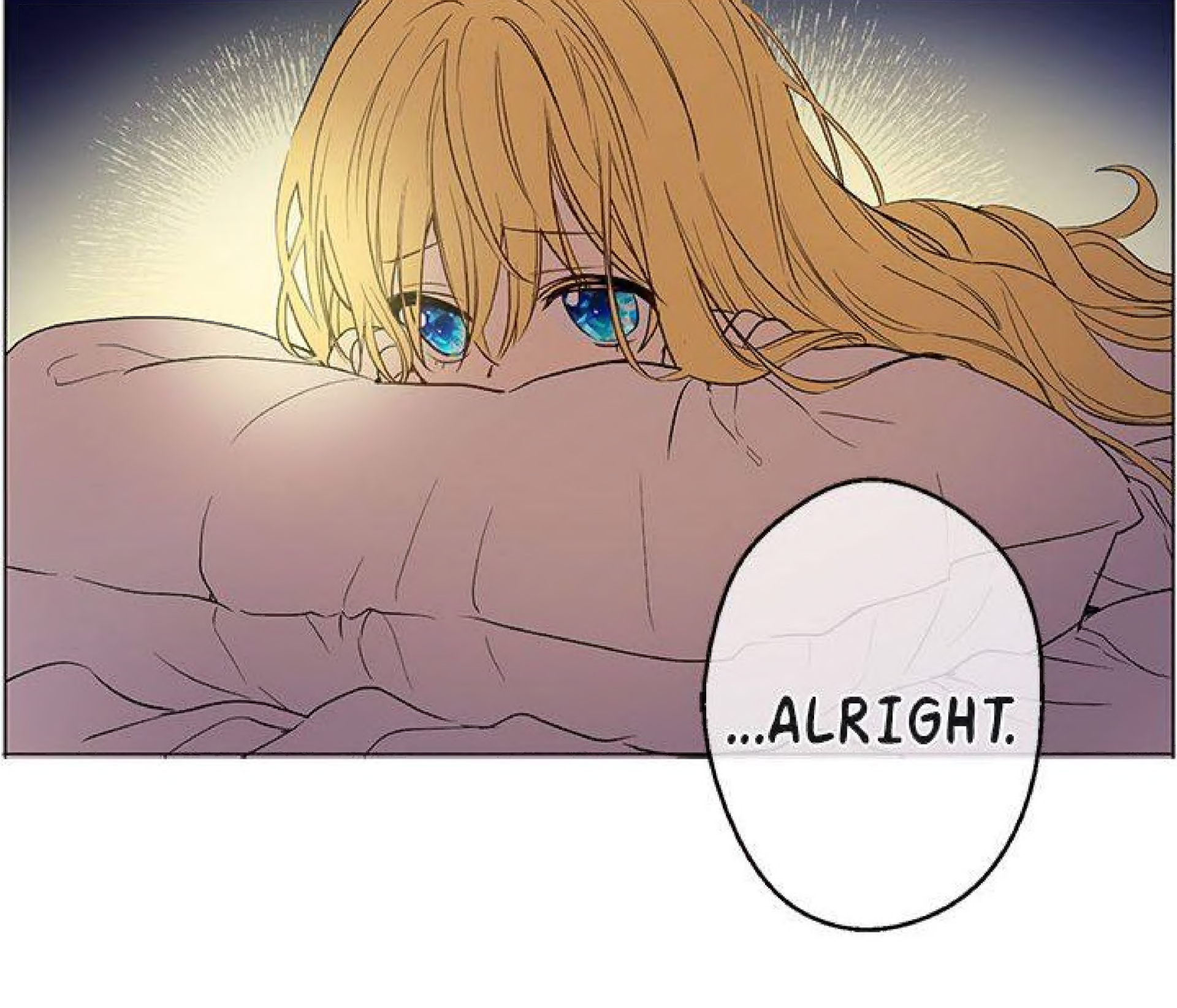
...BUT I MIGHT BE  
ABLE TO GET  
CLOSE ENOUGH  
TO HIM SO THAT  
HE WON'T WANT  
TO MURDER ME.



HE DID LET ME GO  
AFTER HEARING ME  
BLURT OUT "PAPA."



SO SHAMEFUL!





I'M GONNA  
CARRY OUT BOTH  
PLAN B AND  
PLAN C!

THE SHAME AND  
EMBARRASSMENT I'LL  
SUFFER FROM IT...

...WILL BE AN  
INVESTMENT FOR  
MY FUTURE.



PRINCESS,  
IT'S BED  
TIME.



TUCK ME  
IN, LILY...

hng

To Be Continued